

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-9, 11-18, 20-23, and 25-26 are pending in the present application. Claims 6, 10, 19, and 24 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 11 and 14 are independent.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 10, 11, 23 and 24 recite allowable subject matter and would be allowed if rewritten into independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. In the above amendments, the allowable features of claim 10 have been added to independent claim 1. Dependent claim 11 has been rewritten into independent form including all of the features of base claim 1. Independent claim 14 has been amended to include the allowable features of claim 24. All other claims depend from these clearly allowable independent claims 1, 11 or 14. Therefore, all pending claims are clearly in condition for allowance and Applicant earnestly solicits an early indication therefore in the form of a Notice of Allowance.

Art Rejections

Claims 1-5, 12, 14-18, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Fujiwara et al. Claims 7 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujiwara et al. in view of Morioka. Also, claims 8, 9, 13, 21, 22, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fujiwara et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In view of the incorporation of allowable subject matter into each of the independent claims, these rejections have clearly been rendered moot. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of all of the art-based rejections.

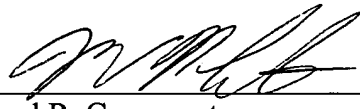
Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned, at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: August 18, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Michael R. Cammarata
Registration No.: 39,491
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Rd
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorneys for Applicant